GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1654
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2002
VISIT OF M.PS. DELEGATION TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES
BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB;DINSHA J. PATEL;RAM SHAKAL;RENU KUMARI SINGH;RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUNIL KHAN;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had sent delegations consisting of Members of Parliament to different countries to project New Delhi`s position on terrorism;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the countries visited;

(c) the criteria adopted for the selection of Members of Parliament; and

(d) the success achieved by these delegations in their purpose?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

(a)-(d) Seven high level delegations comprising members from both Houses of Parliament, distinguished scholars and former diplomats visited selected countries in Europe, West Asia, Gulf, South East Asia and Africa.One delegation also met with Members of the European Parliament in Brussels.The countries visited included Brunei, Indonesia, Nigeria, Belgium, South Africa, Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar, Tunisia, Oman, Egypt, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The visiting delegations appropriately and effectively highlighted the fact that despite professing support to the international coalition against terrorism, Pakistan continues to sponsor cross border terrorism in India, and that this is the main cause for tensions between India and Pakistan. The delegations also effectively conveyed that the December 13 attack on India`s Parliament has once again highlighted the fact that Pakistan is the real epicenter of terrorism in the region, and that its policy of sponsoring terrorism can have grave consequences for both regional and international security. The delegations also conveyed India`s desire for peaceful, friendly and cooperative ties with Pakistan and emphasized that Pakistan must end its use of terrorism as an instrument of policy towards India, so that appropriate conditions for the resumption of a meaningful dialogue are created.

All delegations were very well received by the hosts, and held meetings at high levels of government in the countries that they visited.